



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Educational Opportunity  
Centers Program

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of  
Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is  
issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for  
fiscal year (FY) 2021 for the Educational Opportunity  
Centers (EOC) Program, Assistance Listing Number 84.066A.  
This notice relates to the approved information collection  
under OMB control number 1840-0820.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE  
FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 45  
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 105  
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting  
an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for  
Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant  
Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 13,  
2019 (84 FR 3768), and available at  
[www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-](https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-)

02206.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rachael Wiley Ed.D, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 271-24, Washington, DC 20202-4260. Telephone: (202) 453-6078. Email: Rachael.Wiley@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of the EOC Program are to: provide information regarding financial and academic assistance available for qualified individuals who want to enter or continue to pursue a program of postsecondary education; provide assistance to those individuals in applying for admission to institutions that offer programs of postsecondary education, including assistance in preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers; and improve the financial and economic literacy of program participants.

Priorities: This notice contains three competitive preference priorities. Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2 are from the Secretary's Notice of Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on March 2,

2018 (83 FR 9096) (Supplemental Priorities). Competitive Preference Priority 3 is from the Secretary's Notice of Administrative Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on March 9, 2020 (85 FR 13640) (Administrative Priorities).

Note: Applicants must include, in the one-page abstract submitted with the application, a statement indicating which, if any, of the competitive preference priorities are addressed. If the applicant has addressed the competitive preference priorities, this information must also be listed on the EOC Program Profile Form.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2021 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award an application up to two additional points for each priority, for a total of up to six additional points, depending on how well the application meets each of these priorities.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Ensuring that Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families Have Access to High-Quality Educational Options (up to 2 points).

Projects that are designed to address the academic needs of military- or veteran-connected students (as defined in this notice).

Competitive Priority 2: Fostering Flexible and Affordable Paths to Obtaining Knowledge and Skills (up to 2 points).

Projects that are designed to create or expand opportunities for individuals to obtain recognized postsecondary credentials through the demonstration of prior knowledge and skills, such as competency-based learning. Such credentials may include an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Competitive Priority 3: Applications that Demonstrate a Rationale (up to 2 points).

Under this priority, an applicant proposes a project that demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1).

Definitions: The definitions below are from 34 CFR 77.1 and the Supplemental Priorities.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant

outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Note: In developing logic models, applicants may want to use resources such as the Regional Educational Laboratory Program's (REL Pacific) Education Logic Model Application, available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/elm.asp>, to help design their logic models. Other sources include: [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL\\_2014025.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014025.pdf), [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL\\_2014007.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf), and [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL\\_2015057.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015057.pdf).

Military- or veteran-connected student means a student who is a member of the uniformed services, a veteran of the uniformed services, or the spouse of a service member or veteran.

Note: For the purpose of this definition, "student" may include a prospective student.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional

practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.  
Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16.

Note: Projects must be awarded and operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and the Federal civil rights laws.

Application Requirements: For FY 2021 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, applicants must meet the following application requirements from 34 CFR 644.11.

An applicant must submit, as part of its application, assurances that--

(a) At least two-thirds of the individuals it serves under its proposed EOC project will be low-income individuals who are potential first-generation college students;

(b) The project will collaborate with other Federal TRIO projects, GEAR UP projects, or programs serving similar populations that are serving the same target schools or target area in order to minimize the duplication of services and promote collaborations so that more

students can be served;

(c) The project will be located in a setting or settings accessible to the individuals proposed to be served by the project; and

(d) If the applicant is an institution of higher education, it will not use the project as a part of its recruitment program.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75 (except for §§ 75.215 through 75.221), 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 644. (e) The Supplemental Priorities. (f) The Administrative Priorities.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR 86 apply to institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

## II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$55,994,306.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$232,050 - \$1,280,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$273,793.

Maximum Award: The maximum award varies based on whether the applicant is currently receiving an EOC Program grant, as well as the number of participants served.

- For an applicant that is not currently receiving an EOC Program grant, the maximum award amount is \$232,050. Applicants must have a per-participant cost of no more than \$273 and propose to serve a minimum of 850 participants.

- For an applicant that is currently receiving an EOC Program grant--

1. The applicant may request a maximum award amount that is an amount equal to 100 percent of the applicant's base award amount for FY 2020 to serve a minimum number of participants equal to the applicant's approved FY 2020 participant number; or

2. If the applicant proposes to reduce the number of participants to be served below the amount served in FY 2020, the proposed number of participants must be at least 850 and the per-participant cost must not exceed the applicant's cost per participant for FY 2020 or \$273, whichever is greater. For example, if an applicant's per



participant cost for FY 2020 is \$344 and the applicant is proposing to serve 850 participants under the FY 2021 competition, the applicant would be eligible to request a \$292,400 grant ( $\$344 \times 850 = \$292,400$ ).

Note: Applicants currently receiving an EOC Program grant in FY 2020 are strongly encouraged to continue to serve the same number of participants under the proposed project.

Estimated Number of Awards: 140.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

### III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: IHEs; public and private agencies and organizations, including community-based organizations with experience in serving disadvantaged youth; secondary schools; and combinations of such institutions, agencies, and organizations.

Note: If you are a nonprofit organization, under 34 CFR 75.51, you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of

its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

2. a. Cost Sharing or Matching: This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

b. Indirect Cost Rate Information: This program uses a training indirect cost rate. This limits indirect cost reimbursement to an entity's actual indirect costs, as determined in its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or eight percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For more information regarding training indirect cost rates, see 34 CFR 75.562. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html).

c. Administrative Cost Limitation: This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform

Guidance.

3. Subgrantees: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

4. Other: An applicant may submit more than one application for an EOC Program grant so long as each application describes a project that serves a different target area (34 CFR 644.10(a)). The term "target area" is defined as a geographic area served by a project (34 CFR 644.7(b)).

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768) and available at [www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf](http://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf), which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

3. Funding Restrictions: We specify unallowable costs in 34 CFR 644.31. We reference additional

regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative, which includes the budget narrative, to no more than 60 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger, and no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract. However, the recommended page limit

does apply to all of the application narrative.

We recommend that any application addressing the competitive preference priorities include no more than three additional pages for each priority addressed.

#### V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 644.21. We will award up to 100 points to an application under the selection criteria and up to 6 additional points to an application under the competitive preference priorities, for a total score of up to 106 points. The maximum number of points available for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(a) Need for the project (24 points). The Secretary evaluates the need for an EOC project in the proposed target area on the basis of the extent to which the application contains clear evidence of--

(1) A high number or percentage, or both, of low-income families residing in the target area;

(2) A high number or percentage, or both, of individuals residing in the target area with education completion levels below the baccalaureate level;

(3) A high need on the part of residents of the target area for further education and training from programs of postsecondary education in order to meet changing employment trends; and

(4) Other indicators of need for an EOC project, including the presence of unaddressed educational or socio-economic problems of adult residents in the target area.

(b) Objectives (8 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the applicant's objectives and proposed targets (percentages) in the following areas on the basis of the extent to which they are both ambitious, as related to the need data provided under selection criterion (a), and attainable, given the project's plan of operation, budget, and other resources--

(1) Secondary school diploma or equivalent (2 points).

(2) Postsecondary enrollment (3 points).

(3) Financial aid applications (1.5 points).

(4) College admission applications (1.5 points).

(c) Plan of operation (30 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the applicant's plan of operation on the basis of the following--

(1) The plan to inform the residents, schools, and community organizations in the target area of the goals, objectives, and services of the project and the eligibility requirements for participation in the project (4 points);

(2) The plan to identify and select eligible participants and ensure their participation without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, or disability (4 points);

(3) The plan to assess each participant's need for services provided by the project (2 points);

(4) The plan to provide services that meet the participants' needs and achieve the objectives of the project (12 points); and

(5) The management plan to ensure the proper and efficient administration of the project including, but not limited to, the project's organizational structure, the time committed to the project by the project director and other personnel, and, where appropriate, its coordination with other projects for disadvantaged students (8 points).

(d) Applicant and community support (16 points). The Secretary evaluates the applicant and community support for the proposed project on the basis of the extent to which the applicant has made provision for resources to supplement the grant and enhance the project's services, including--

(1) Facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel, and other resources committed by the applicant (8 points); and

(2) Resources secured through written commitments from schools, community organizations, and others (8 points).

(e) Quality of personnel (9 points). (1) The Secretary evaluates the quality of the personnel the applicant plans to use in the project on the basis of the following--

(i) The qualifications required of the project director.

(ii) The qualifications required of each of the other personnel to be used in the project.

(iii) The plan to employ personnel who have succeeded in overcoming disadvantages or circumstances like those of the population of the target area.

(2) In evaluating the qualifications of a person, the Secretary considers his or her experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project.

(f) Budget (5 points). The Secretary evaluates the extent to which the project budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and adequate to support the project.

(g) Evaluation plan (8 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the evaluation plan for the project on the basis of the extent to which the applicant's methods of evaluation--

(1) Are appropriate to the project's objectives;

(2) Provide for the applicant to determine, using specific and quantifiable measures, the success of the project in--

(i) Making progress toward achieving its objectives (a formative evaluation); and

(ii) Achieving its objectives at the end of the project period (a summative evaluation); and



(3) Provide for the disclosure of unanticipated project outcomes, using quantifiable measures if appropriate.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 644.21. The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process. Additionally, in accordance with 34 CFR 644.22, the Secretary will award prior experience points to applicants that conducted an EOC Program project during budget periods 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20, based on their documented experience. Prior experience points, if any, will be added to the application's averaged reader score to determine the total score for each application.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will choose among the tied applications so as to serve geographic areas and

eligible populations that have been underserved by the EOC Program.

3. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2), we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information

about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

5. In General: In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with--

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115-232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (2 CFR 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341);

(d) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(e) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

## VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the

reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to [www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

5. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, the following measure will be used by the Department to evaluate the success of the EOC Program: participants' success in completing a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, completion of applications for student financial aid, submission of applications for postsecondary admission, and postsecondary enrollment. All EOC Program grantees will be required to submit annual performance reports.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the

project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

#### VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at

www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at: [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

---

Christopher J. McCaghren,  
*Acting Assistant Secretary for  
Postsecondary Education.*